



**Bill: HB 558**

**Title: Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established**

**Hearing Date: March 27, 2024**

**Position: UNFAVORABLE**

**Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment**

**Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee urges an unfavorable report for HB 558.** Just as in the last General Assembly when this bill was introduced as HB119/SB199, there is a broad and major consensus against this legislation. HB 558 is being opposed by MSDE, the MD State Board of Education, the MD Association of Boards of Education and the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland. This bill is also opposed by many local municipalities as well, for reasons that this legislation usurps the local authority of local school systems. Authority for educational decisions for a public school system should reside at the local level.

Not only is this legislation an infringement on local authority, it also acts to disenfranchise the voters who elect their district representatives to their local Boards of Education. This bill would silence the voters' voices and hinder their expressing interests in matters concerning their local school systems. **A one size fits all approach to education via legislation mandating frameworks and course content is a very slippery slope to which many various special interests as well as local government bodies are vehemently opposed.**

In addition to the infringement on local control, Moms for Liberty Maryland strongly opposes this bill on the grounds that it is an infringement on fundamental parental rights. Parents entrust their children to the public school system to provide an academic education not an indoctrination into ideologies

that run counter to a family's morals and values. **By restricting parents' ability to opt their children out of content and curriculum that runs counter to their belief systems, this bill undermines parents' fundamental rights to direct the education, morals and health decisions for their children.**

The current MSDE framework for Comprehensive Health Education contains the provision for teaching gender ideology topics to kindergarteners. The ideas this framework proposes to codify into law include teaching 5 year olds that there are more than two genders and that they can choose their gender. Gender ideology is not factual but this framework wants to treat this controversial topic as fact. The sort of gender ideology indoctrination contained in the current Comprehensive Health Framework is harmful to young children. Planting unsubstantiated theories into the minds of young children is abusive and dangerous. [https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DCAA/Health/Health\\_Education\\_Framework\\_July\\_2022.pdf](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DCAA/Health/Health_Education_Framework_July_2022.pdf)

The 7th grade framework discusses teaching 7th graders as young as 12 years old about "anal and solo sex." Many parents object to this subject matter being taught to their 7th graders on moral and religious grounds. By violating personally held religious beliefs held by various religious institutions, this legislation is a clear infringement on parents' fundamental rights to direct the education and moral training of their children.

### **Why would the State of Maryland want to trample on families' sincerely held religious beliefs?**

By removing the option for parents to opt-out of the Gender Ideology and Sexual Orientation pieces of the current framework, this bill is a deliberate and malicious attack on the rights of parents. **It is not in the realm of the State of Maryland's authority to override a family's moral or religious beliefs.**

Moms for Liberty Maryland humbly requests that this committee take into serious consideration the overwhelming disapproval for this bill. The amendments to remove Gender Ideology from the Family Life component of the framework and removing an opt out provision have only made this bill more onerous. **We urge an Unfavorable Report for HB 558.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Suzie Scott, Chair*

**Moms for Liberty MD Legislative Committee**